

Strides to a Healthier Worksite Toolkit



2008

*South Dakota Department of Health
Office of Health Promotion
Nutrition & Physical Activity Program
615 East 4th Street
Pierre, SD. 57501
605.773.3737
www.HealthySD.gov*





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INTRODUCTION

The Strides to a Healthier Worksite Tool Kit was developed by the South Dakota Nutrition & Physical Activity Program. This program is part of a Healthy South Dakota initiative of the South Dakota Department of Health. The Department of Health and its partners work to help people detect diseases early and address risky behaviors that can lead to disease. The risk factors include physical inactivity, poor nutrition, obesity, tobacco addiction, high blood pressure, and high blood cholesterol. At both local and state levels, these goals are accomplished by working with employers, schools, healthcare systems, and communities to support healthy lifestyles.

PURPOSE

The purpose of the Strides to a Healthier Worksite Tool Kit is to provide tools for South Dakota employers to improve employee health. The kit contains information on the following topics:

- ★ The link between healthy work environments and the bottom line
 - ★ Key elements of successful worksite wellness programs
 - ★ Strategies that support healthy behaviors
 - ★ Resources to support worksite wellness programs

Worksite Program Development

Why Worksites?

- The cost of health care is increasing every year.
- Worksite wellness programs have been shown to reduce health care-related costs, reduce employee absenteeism and improve productivity.
- Demands of work and fast-paced lifestyles are taxing on healthy eating habits and physical activity.
- Over 60% of South Dakota adults are overweight or obese (SD BRFSS).
- More than 75% of medical care costs are attributed to chronic diseases, which in large part are preventable. (CDC)

Worksite based programs involve planning and creating environments that make the healthy choice the easiest choice for eating and physical activity.

Science Based Strategies

Research shows five strategies have sufficient science-based evidence to help prevent obesity and chronic disease. Environmental and policy changes and activities on these topics are excellent ways to achieve healthy lifestyles. These five strategies are as follows:

- Breast-feeding (For more information, see page 12)
- Increased Vegetable and Fruit Intake (Fruits & Veggies—More Matters) (For more information, see page 9)
- Increased Physical Activity (For more information, see page 11)
- Decreased Television Viewing (For more information, see page 10)
- Dietary Determinates of Energy Balance (Caloric intake & quality of diet)
 1. Control Portion Size
 2. Decreased sweetened beverages (For more information, see page 10)

What are Policy and Environment Changes?

Policy and environmental changes enable worksites to support healthy behaviors. "It is unreasonable to expect large proportions of the population to make individual behavior changes that are discouraged by the environment and existing social norms" (Schmid, Pratt and Howze, 1995). It does little good, for example, to encourage people to take a walk outside if their neighborhoods are unsafe or unpleasant, or to promote healthy eating when fresh fruits and vegetables are not readily accessible or affordable. Worksite policies and environment should not discourage healthy behaviors, but rather promote a healthy lifestyle whenever possible.

The focus of this resource kit is on developing policy and environmental changes in the work environment, which ultimately lead to workplaces that support healthy lifestyles. The kit offers examples of policy and environmental changes that have created healthier work environments with low or no-cost strategies.

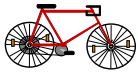
EXAMPLES OF WORKSITE POLICY AND ENVIRONMENTAL CHANGES

- ! Provide safe walking environment on facility grounds.
- ! Provide clean, safe and appealing stairwells and promote their use.
- ! Encourage walking during breaks and lunch breaks.
- ! Promote healthy lifestyles by modeling healthy behaviors.
- ! Offer and identify healthy food choices in vending machines, snack bars, and/or cafeterias.
- ! Promote the adoption of Fruits & Veggies—More Matters (increased fruits & veggies) in catering/cafeteria policies.
- ! Offer healthy food alternatives at meetings, company functions, potlucks and celebrations.
- ! Make water available throughout the day by providing a bottled water dispenser in your worksite.
- ! Provide programs and policies that promote breast-feeding.
- ! Provide a place to express or breast-feed.
- ! Offer flexible schedule to express or breast-feed.
- ! Conduct awareness campaigns for families to reduce TV viewing, improve diet and increase physical activity.
- ! Create a worksite culture that discourages sedentary behavior, such as TV viewing on breaks and sitting for long periods of time.

Why Focus on Physical Activity and Nutrition?

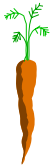
Physical inactivity and poor nutrition are behavioral risk factors that can have grave consequences on an individual's health. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), these two risk behaviors are responsible for at least 365,000 *preventable* deaths each year, second only to tobacco use.

Encouraging physical activity and healthy eating, as well as creating environments and establishing policies which support these behaviors are critical to reducing the burden of a number of chronic diseases, including South Dakota's number one killer—cardiovascular disease.



How much is enough? The South Dakota Department of Health recommends 30 minutes of moderate-intensity physical activity at least five days per week. It is acceptable to accumulate physical activity in bouts of at least 10 minutes.

Therefore, taking a few short walks is an example of a quick and easy way to start getting the physical activity you need during the day.



Consuming more fruits and vegetables per day, monitoring portion size and quality of diet, and eating a diet low in saturated fat are key steps towards a healthy diet.

Stages of Change

The **Stages of Change** model offers levels of a person's "readiness to change".

These are:

- ★ Precontemplation - not intending to change or resisting change ("I just don't see how this is going to help me.")
- ★ Contemplation - Intending to change or considering change ("I know I need to start exercising, but I just can't seem to find the time.")
- ★ Preparation - Getting ready for change or making small changes ("I bought a lunch bag so I can start bringing my own lunch to work.")
- ★ Action - Making a change or taking action on a regular basis for a short period of time (less than six months) ("I have been meditating at least once a day for a couple of months.")
- ★ Maintenance - Sustaining the change ("I have been walking regularly for over a year as a member of the local walking club.")

Workplace wellness programs focused on environmental issues allow for individual progress to higher stages at their own pace. It is important not to push change beyond an individual's readiness.

The Process

1. Identify a Committed Coordinator

This individual will be charged with leading the program.

This person will work with the wellness committee to implement the program.

2. Gain Support of Top Management

The most important factor of program success is the level of support and participation from senior management.

Employer Survey- Conduct inventory for employers regarding employee health and promotion of physical activity and nutrition. Employers are an important component in promoting physical activity/nutrition programs and can build interest and participation in the program.

3. Organize a Wellness Committee

The best way to generate and implement new ideas is through a wellness committee. It is critical a wellness program have a dedicated committee. A wellness committee, drawing members from different work areas within the workplace, establishes motivation, continuity, and ownership of the program. This group will oversee and implement the program.

4. Assess Needs & Interests

To best plan for new wellness activities, information must first be gathered from the people who make up the worksite. This information gathering process gives the wellness committee a better sense of employee interests, needs and barriers.

Employee Interest Survey- Short survey of interests and needs is administered to workplace employees that include employees in the planning process.

5. Strategies

After looking at all of the information gathered in the inventory exercise, determine the barriers, interests and needs of employees. While reviewing the strategies, keep in mind what is reasonable and feasible to make change in your workplace, and what changes are likely to cause the greatest impact on physical inactivity/unhealthy eating.

6. Set Goals and Objectives for the Wellness Program

Measurable objectives will assist in program evaluation.

7. Implement Programs

Using proven strategies develop activities to address healthy nutrition and increased physical activity.

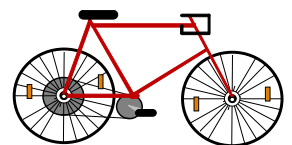
8. Evaluate Programs

Develop a plan to evaluate activities and programs.

The Process Continued...

WORKSITE WELLNESS PROGRAMS

- **The Plan** **Page 14**
Briefly detail the plan of strategies you would like to implement at your workplace. Remember to use partners in your community whenever possible to extend your resources.
- **Objective/Evaluation** **Page 15-17**
In order to show that the changes you make have an impact, it's necessary to develop objectives and determine a means to measure them. Follow the guidelines and samples provided.
- **Budget** **Page 18-19**
Develop a budget bearing in mind the funds you have available and that they directly support a science based strategy. If the activities you have in mind require much more substantial funding, think of smaller steps and processes that can be funded. Start seeking partners who might be interested in contributing time, resources, or money to move ahead with the rest of the plan.





Activities to Support Physical Activity/Nutrition Change

Strategy 1

Activities to Promote Fruits & Veggies—More Matters

1. Offer appealing, low-cost, healthy food options, such as fruits and vegetables, juices, and low-fat dairy products in vending machines, snack bars, break rooms, and/or cafeterias. These can include fresh, canned, and dried fruits, 100 percent fruit or vegetable juice, plain or mixed nuts, low-fat bagged snacks, nonfat yogurt and milk.
2. Post motivational signs about Fruits & Veggies—More Matters (eating more fruits & veggies), nutrition, and healthful eating in the cafeteria and break rooms.
3. Just as employees often organize to purchase coffee or spring water as a group, encourage employees to organize for group purchases of fruits, vegetables, and other healthy snacks.
4. Distribute Fruits & Veggies—More Matters materials and messages on worksite bulletin boards and newsletters.
5. Establish an on-site or neighborhood farmers' market at a workplace or among several workplaces in collaboration with a group of employers.
6. Place nutrition action stickers on phone handsets or other “in your face” locations.
7. Offer coupons for fruits and vegetables as reward for work well done or some other reason.

8. Distribute educational materials, such as newsletters, recipes, brochures, and posters, at workplaces to show the benefits of eating fruits and vegetables and how to prepare healthy meals throughout the day.

Strategy 2

Activities to Decrease TV Viewing

1. Reduce television viewing time by sponsoring a “Turn off TV Night” and offer alternatives for employees and their families to choose from.
2. Build awareness of reduced TV viewing through payroll stuffers, posters and table tents in cafeteria.
3. Provide information to parents in reducing TV viewing time of children.
4. Offer parenting programs addressing parental monitoring and setting of rules (e.g. no TV in a child’s bedroom, not having the TV on all of the time, not letting children watch TV alone, not watching TV during meals).
5. Sponsor family game night for employees and families to encourage alternatives to TV viewing. Include active games such as bocce, croquet or disc golf.

Strategy 3

Caloric Intake/Quality of Diet

1. Provide healthy choices in vending machines.
2. Create a worksite culture that minimizes consumption of low-nutrition foods and beverages, such as cakes at parties, candy bowls, and sweets as rewards.
3. Offer healthful food alternatives at meetings, company functions, and health education events.

4. Make available reliable resources on general nutrition related to portion size (for example, portion size placemat or plate, food models).
5. Promote healthy eating lifestyles by providing cooking classes to educate on techniques of healthy cooking and incorporating healthy foods into meals.
6. Make water available throughout the day by providing a bottled water dispenser in your worksite period.
7. Collaborate with nearby restaurants and/or local dining establishments to offer healthy foods and promote nutritious specials at reasonable prices.
8. Promote healthy eating behaviors by offering nutrition education classes based on assessments of interest and need.
9. Provide protected time and dedicated space away from the work area for breaks and lunch.
10. Place prompters for healthy food choices on vending machines.
11. Make refrigerators available for employees' food storage.
12. Provide incentives for participation in nutrition and/or weight management/maintenance activities.
13. Start a healthy recipes exchange where employees swap recipes.
14. Just as employees often organize to purchase coffee or spring water as a group, encourage employees to organize for group purchases of fruits, vegetables, and other healthy snacks.
15. Encourage local restaurants to offer smaller or ½ portion meals on menus at reduced prices.
16. Encourage more family meals.
17. Limit consumption of sweetened beverages.

Strategy 4

Activities to Increase Physical Activity

1. Provide quality/safe sidewalks, trails, safe pedestrian and bicycle access to your worksite.

2. Promote increased bicycling by providing a bike rack for parking at the worksite.
3. Provide clean, safe, and aesthetically appealing stairwells, and post motivational signs at elevators and escalators to encourage usage.
4. Establish on-site fitness rooms or exercise facilities and offer opportunities, such as group classes or personal training.
5. Encourage use of programs like 10,000 Steps, Active for Life, or others as appropriate and of interest to employers and employees.
6. When building new or renovating your facility, set standards for construction so that your facilities will encourage physical activity.
7. Support and promote physical activity breaks during the workday, such as stretching or walking.
8. Implement incentive-based programs to encourage physical activity, such as pedometer walking challenges.
9. Host a walk with the manager program.
10. Post motivational signs at elevators and escalators to encourage use of stairs.
11. Offer flexible work hours to allow for physical activity during the day.
12. Support recreation leagues, community and state park programs with employees.
13. Provide incentives for participation in physical activity and or weight management/maintenance activities.
14. Explore discounted memberships at local health clubs, recreation centers, or YMCA's.
15. Provide articles in employee newsletters promoting physical activity and current opportunities to participate.
16. Display key messages to encourage physical activity on signs or display boards.
17. Post notices of upcoming events in the community, school or faith-based organizations on bulletin boards or email lists.
18. Use multiple channels for interventions, such as community recreation/leisure facilities, on site worksite opportunities, private wellness facilities and state and local parks.
19. Conduct healthy eating and physical activity special events such as a company walk and invite community to join.

Strategy 5

Activities to Increase Breast-feeding

1. Establish workplace programs that promote breast-feeding including a place to pump or breast-feed.
2. Develop resources to target public education that links the impact of breast-feeding to obesity prevention. Make electric breast pumps available at the worksite or provide to employees who breast-feed.
3. Develop social support resources for breast-feeding women (i.e. peer counselor and mother-to-mother networks)
4. Establish workplace programs and policies that promote breast-feeding.
5. Telephone or in-home breast-feeding support (peer counseling).
6. Designate specific areas to support employees with sensitive health issues, such as diabetics and nursing mothers.
7. Facilitate breast-feeding or breast milk expression in the workplace by providing private rooms, commercial grade breast pumps, milk storage arrangements, adequate breaks during the day, flexible work schedules and onsite childcare facilities.
8. Establish family and community programs that enable breast-feeding continuation when women return to work in all possible settings.
9. Encourage childcare facilities to provide quality breast-feeding support.

The Plan

Worksite: _____

Policy/Environmental Barrier: _____

Using data from surveys of employees and the employer and from your discussion of potential strategies, community resources, etc., write a short description of your plan to increase physical activity and healthy eating through worksite interventions.

Describe the methods you will be using to alter or eliminate the policy or environmental barrier you have found in your worksite culture. It is often necessary to partner with other organizations or individuals in the community in order to make your resources extend further. Think about who your potential partners will be as you develop your plan.

Potential Partners List, beginning on page 21.

Objective/Evaluation

You will need a means of measuring whether or not changing the policy/ environmental barrier and interventions you chose had any impact on physical inactivity or unhealthy eating in your target area. In order to do this, it will be necessary to develop clear, time-oriented, and measurable objectives.

An objective reflects changes in knowledge, attitudes, or behaviors. This objective should state the change you hope will occur by altering a policy or environmental barrier. For example, by improving a walking path near your facility you hope that more people will use the path and increase their physical activity as a result of this environmental change. (See Sample Objective/Evaluation worksheet, page 16)

The activities are considered the means to accomplish the objective. They are the big steps necessary to ensure that the change you are anticipating actually occurs. These should also be time-oriented, specific and measurable. (See Sample Objective/Evaluation worksheet, page 16)

Sample Objective/Evaluation

Objective	Partners	Evaluation
By June 2006, 25% of employees will have initiated use of the local walking trail, or increased their use of the trail, due to improvements, beautification efforts and incentives.		Conduct a survey of all employees by May 31, 2006 to assess self-reported trail use resulting from improvement efforts. Provide a small gift for those who return their survey to increase response rate.
<i>The following are some examples of activities—they are not comprehensive, and there are steps before and afterward that should be considered. This is just to give you an idea of the scope of an activity.</i>		
Activity 1: By April 2006, trees will be trimmed and the walking surface improved by adding new gravel along the local walking path.	Meet with local service clubs to explore the possibility of them trimming bushes and trees.	Submit pictures of improved trail.
Activity 2: By May 2006, an article will be placed in the employee newsletter or email regarding the new efforts on the trail and encouraging people to come out and be physically active.	Management will encourage staff to use the trail during breaks and lunch to increase use of the trail.	Employee newsletter will be submitted along with any specific strategies managers use to promote physical activity and trail use

Objective/Evaluation

Objective	Partners	Evaluation
Activity 1:		
Activity 2:		
Activity 3:		
Activity 4:		
Activity 5:		

(You may add a couple more activities, if necessary)

Budget



Below is a sample budget with operating expenses that are consistent with proposed objectives and planned activities. This will help you plan your budgetary needs and allow the workgroup to search for resources based on funding needs.

Sample Budget and Justification

Description	Cost	Justification
Meeting expense (with local service clubs)	\$100.00	Activity 1-We want to explore the possibility of local service clubs trimming bushes & trees
Environmental change (Walking surface improvement)	\$1,000.00	Activity 1-Trail will be re-surfaced with gravel
Incentives- pedometers	100 employees- \$5.00 each = \$500.00	Provide pedometers for all employees for monitoring of physical activity
Newsletter article	\$500.00	Activity 2-Employee stipend for work on employee wellness communication/organization
TOTAL	\$2,100.00	

Budget and Justification

Description	Cost	Justification

WORKSITE ACTIVITIES TO PROMOTE AWARENESS

1. Provide articles in the newspaper or newsletter promoting physical activity and nutrition activities in the worksite.
2. Display key messages on a community sign or display board at worksite facility.
3. Insert notices of upcoming events in newsletters or emails.
4. Share employee success stories to encourage others to participate and provide recognition.
5. Create a logo that recognizes a healthy choice or wellness participant.
6. Provide shirts or bags for participants in the wellness program.
7. Offer health education/information presentations on various physical activity, nutrition and wellness-related topics.
8. Provide health information through newsletters, publications, Web sites, email, libraries, and other company connections.
9. Conduct preventive wellness screenings for blood pressure, body composition, blood cholesterol, and diabetes.
10. Provide confidential health risk appraisals.
11. Host a health fair.
12. Offer on-site management/maintenance programs at a convenient time for employees.
13. Reward teamwork and social support for employees who adopt and maintain healthy behaviors such as team-based, low or no-cost programs for nutrition and physical activity promotion through friendly competition with recognition of group and individual achievements.
14. Add weight management/maintenance, nutrition, and physical activity counseling as a member benefit in health insurance contracts.



Potential Partners in Worksite Projects



Government sector

Department of Game, Fish, and Parks, Division of Parks & Recreation, Trails Coordinator
Department of Game, Fish, and Parks, Division of Parks & Recreation, Visitors Services Coordinator
Department of Health, Cardiovascular Health
Department of Health, Community Health Services
Department of Health, Maternal and Child Health
Department of Health, WISEWOMAN
Department of Social Services, Child Care
Libraries
Representatives of state, county, and city government
State, county zoning board
State or county cooperative extension service (SDSU Cooperative Extension)
State and local elected officials



Health sector

Insurance Companies
Local hospital and clinic
Private practicing physicians
State and local health departments
State nursing and medical associations such as:
 South Dakota School Nurses Association
State nutrition and physical activity associations such as:
 South Dakota Dietetic Association
 South Dakota Nutrition Council
 South Dakota Park and Recreation Association, Recreation Branch



Education sector

After-school programs
Day care centers, preschool programs
Local elementary, middle, and high schools
Physical educator
Post secondary education
State department of education



Transportation sector

City and regional planning commissions
County commissioners regulating zoning laws
State and local departments of transportation



Business sector

Business leaders
Chamber of Commerce
Farmers markets
Fitness clubs and health spas
Grocery stores and convenience stores
Restaurant owners/managers
Shopping mall managers



Media and communication sector

Chamber newsletter
Employee newsletter
Newspaper editors
Radio station managers
Television stations (cable and public)
Websites



Recreation sector

Community centers
Community team sports clubs (softball, soccer, basketball, volleyball, football, ice hockey)
Local park and recreation departments
State and local parks
Walking, hiking, running clubs



Religious sector

Churches
Church-owned recreation facilities, camps, etc
Parish nursing
Women's groups and men's groups
Youth groups



Voluntary or service organization sector

Action for Healthy Kids representative
American Cancer Society
American Heart Association
Girl Scouts of America, Boy Scouts of America, Boys' and Girls' clubs, 4-H clubs and other youth organizations
Midwest Dairy Council
Rotary, Lions, Kiwanis, Jaycees, and other service organizations